



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

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October 8, 2003

TO: Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, Chair
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley 
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – FOUNDATION
FOR THE JUNIOR BLIND, CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL PROGRAM**

We have completed a review of Foundation for the Junior Blind's, Children's Residential Program (FJB-CRP). FJB-CRP is a licensed Group Home (GH) with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation). FJB-CRP is a forty-bed facility located in the Second Supervisorial District that provides care for boys and girls ages 6-17 years who are multi-disabled youth, including blind, visually impaired, developmentally disabled, mentally retarded, ambulatory or non ambulatory. At the time of the monitoring visit, FJB-CRP was providing services for eleven Los Angeles County DCFS children. In addition, there were regional center children: four from Alameda County, one from Butte County, one from Kern County, nine from Los Angeles County, one from Modesto County, four from Orange County, two from Sacramento County, three from San Bernardino County and three from San Diego County. Hawaii's State Department of Education was responsible for one of the residents.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to verify that FJB-CRP was providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues. The review included an evaluation of FJB-CRP's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, a facility inspection, and interviews with two children placed with FJB-CRP at the time of the review. The interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by FJB-CRP, and to ensure its adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Overall, FJB-CRP is providing the services outlined in its Program Statement. However, FJB-CRP needs to maintain current Needs and Services Plans; develop Quarterly Reports that focus on the goals of the Needs and Services Plans; and provide monthly psychiatric evaluations for those residents prescribed psychotropic medication. Attached is a detailed report of the monitoring findings.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The Agency's management has agreed to provide DCFS with a written corrective action plan within fifteen business days of this report. We thank FJB-CRP's management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Patrick McMahon at (213) 974-0729.

JTM:PM:CC

Attachment

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Richard Shumsky, Chief Probation Officer

FOUNDATION FOR THE JUNIOR BLIND
Children's Residential Program
5300 Angeles Vista Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90043
(323) 295-4555
License No.: 191800260
Rate Classification Level: 10

I. FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

(Facility Based - No Sample)

Method of assessment – Observation and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Foundation for the Junior Blind, Children's Residential Program (FJB-CRP) is located in View Park, a residential neighborhood consisting primarily of single-family homes. FJB-CRP is located within the larger Foundation for the Junior Blind site that includes a short-term adult residential facility, administrative buildings, gymnasium, and a cafeteria. The facility is fully enclosed and occupies nearly eight acres. The grounds are large and attractive. There is a grassy area; cemented areas, one that is utilized as a walking track; and a garden with an area for sitting.

The overall layout of the Children's Residential Program provides very comfortable living conditions for the children. The bedrooms were color coordinated, bright, and lively. The bedroom furniture, consisting of beds, ample drawer space and a bulletin board, was attractive and in good condition. The residents personalize their bedrooms with various things, including posters, their own artwork, stuffed animals, photographs, and toys.

The common areas were nicely furnished and provide a spacious and safe area for relaxing, socializing, watching television, coloring, playing board games and other activities.

Indoor recreational activities included cartoon movies, sing-along videos, coloring and drawing, matching games and group/cooperative activities. The on-ground recreational opportunities were adequate and included a swimming pool and a specially designed play yard, which offers various tactile stimuli and interactive play opportunities for the children. Both outdoor and indoor recreational activities were sufficient and accessible to the children.

The residential floors had a kitchenette utilized for storing and preparing snacks. The food was properly stored and dated. There was also a professional on-grounds kitchen staffed with a professional cook and assistants. The facility is required to maintain the kitchen in accordance with the Department of Health licensing standards.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. PROGRAM SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents met the Children's Residential Program's population criteria as outlined in their program statement. The initial assessments were thorough and completed within the allotted time frame of thirty days. There was documentation confirming that the children's authorized representatives were included in the initial assessment.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) were insufficient and outdated in that they reflected identical issues, goals and objectives of the previous NSPs.

The Quarterly Reports although comprehensive were inadequate because they are based on delinquent NSPs.

The Agency provides residents with a wide variety of therapeutic services and treatment programs which are described in their program statement.

Recommendations

- 1. FJB-CRP management:**
 - a. Maintain current Needs and Services Plans for each resident with goals and objectives that are attainable, realistic and time limited.**
 - b. Develop Quarterly Reports that focus on the objectives and goals in the Needs and Services Plans.**

III. EDUCATIONAL AND EMANCIPATION SERVICES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents were enrolled in school. Each resident had an Individualized Education Plan that was thorough and provided specialized and specific information.

The Agency offered appropriate programs that supported the educational goals. Many of the goals and objectives set in the educational setting were directly related to adaptive functioning, activities of daily living, self-help, and survival skills.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. RECREATION AND ACTIVITIES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents indicated that they do fun things which are supported by the daily schedule and activities. The facility has many on-grounds recreational opportunities, including a pool, specialized playground and gymnasium. FJB-CRP also utilized various community resources including local parks and museums, amusement parks, the aquarium, pet store, and animal shelter. Transportation was provided unless the destination was within a short walking distance.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. PSYCHOTROPIC/OTHER MEDICATION

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: There were eleven residents placed in the agency at the time of the review. A review of case files was conducted for the five residents on psychotropic medication.

Comments:

There were current court authorizations for the residents prescribed psychotropic medication. However, there were current psychiatric evaluations for only three of the five residents.

Medication logs were properly maintained.

Recommendations

2. FJB-CRP management provide monthly psychiatric evaluations for all residents who are prescribed psychotropic medication.

VI. PERSONAL RIGHTS

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

There was no indication that any of the children's personal rights were being violated. However, due to the developmental level of the residents, their limited verbal and expressive language skills, this could not be determined to any great extent. The residents indicated that they received enough good food, they like the staff, and their living quarters. The residents appeared to be content and well cared for. They were clean, neatly dressed, smiled, and seemed playful. The program relies primarily on praise, specific encouragement and a strong behavior management/modification program. There was no discipline system in place.

Each resident is expected to maintain their personal hygiene, their personal items, and the space around them according to their individual abilities.

FJB-CRP appeared to be respectful of the children's individuality, their ethnic and cultural lifestyle. Their religious beliefs are respected and they are permitted to accompany those persons, approved by their authorized representatives, to take them on off-grounds visits including church.

The children moved about the facility freely however a one-to-two staff-to-child ratio is maintained in the waking hours. The residents were free from interference with daily living functions and are encouraged to take the initiative in pursuing activities of daily living, such as toileting and hand washing.

The residents could name their favorite foods and desserts and indicated that they were satisfied with the food.

The children reported an overall satisfaction with the agency.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. CLOTHING AND ALLOWANCES

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

FJB-CRP provides appropriate clothing and items of necessity to the residents. FJB-CRP supplies its residents with the required monthly clothing allowance in the amount of fifty dollars. The residents are unable to keep, manage or spend money therefore, they are not provided with an allowance.

FJB-CRP provides residents with adequate personal care items and sufficient, secure space to store their personal items.

FJB-CRP staff does the primary work in maintaining life books for the residents. Achievement certificates, self photos and photos of family and friends are posted in each child's room on their bulletin board. As the child accumulates new pictures, certificates etc., the old pictures, achievement certificates and cards are placed in their personal photo album.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.